

# TIDEWATER APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monthly Meeting  
December 4, 2024

### Members Present:

Bill Bunch, Bruce Davidson, Andy Grayson, Paul Heymann, Lee Lohman, Mike Martin, Kaci Midgette, Kama Mitchell, Jim Newman, Greg Reck, Peg Seriani, Rich Seriani, Jim Sexton, John Sima, and Lelia Vann

### Members Absent:

John Barnes, Sandra Canepa, Brittany Collins, Catherine Fowler, Greg Hodges, Ned Kuhns, Sharon Salyer and Don Williams

**Other attendees:** Lon Carpenter

1. **Welcome and Call to Order:** The meeting, with a quorum, was called to order by President Vann at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Proceedings of Previous Meeting:** The November 2024 Board meeting minutes were accepted without amendment.
3. **Finance Report - Andy Grayson, Treasurer:** Andy presented the Treasurer's report.  
Our November financials show the club continuing to be in good overall financial condition. Income to date is slightly above our year-end projection and continues to run a little high. While the pro-rated spending is slightly above the prorated budget, it is over by less than the amount we are above our target for income. So, at least for now, I'm projecting us coming in on track at the end of the fiscal year.  
Balance: October balance was \$36,547.16. **Current November balance is \$38,318.47.**  
-Andy will draft a new budget in early February 2025.  
-Budget audit date and location TBD.  
-Budget presentation will be at the March GMM.  
-Some BOD members requested Andy to streamline the number of category lines in the budget.
4. **Membership Report - Sharon Salyer/Kama Mitchell, Membership:** Kama presented the Membership report.  
October 2024: 439 members. **Current November membership is 434 members.**
5. **Lightning Round Reported:**
  - A. Trail Supervisor Report - John Sima, Trail Supervisor**
    - November 9-10: Sawyer Training - [See "Lesson's Learned" under Discussion](#)
    - November 16: Sawyer Recertification Training - [See "Lesson's Learned" under Discussion](#)
    - March tbd: Sherando Cleanup Day
    - April tbd: Spring Backpacking AT Walk-Thru
    - April 25-27: Spring AT Maintenance
    - June 20-22: Swingblade & Lopperfest #1
    - July 18-20: Swingblade & Lopperfest #2
    - August 22-24: Swingblade & Lopperfest #3
    - October tbd: Fall Backpacking AT Walk-Thru
    - October 24-26: Fall AT Maintenance
  - B. Cabin Report - Gregory Hodges, Cabin Committee Chair**
    - No report.
  - C. Local Trails Report - Paul Heymann, Local Trail Supervisor**
    - Planned for First Landing Live Oak/Cedar Swamp Trails. Subject to changes upon request of First Landing State Park.

-Thursday, December 19, 2024, Dave Plum

### **Tentative 2025 Schedule**

-Saturday, January 18

-Saturday, February 15: Paul Heymann

-Saturday, March 15

-Thursday, April 17: Bob Mooney

-Thursday, May 22

-Thursday, June 12

-Thursday, July 10

-Thursday, August 14

-Thursday, September 18

-Thursday, October 16

-Saturday, November 15

-Thursday, December 11

-Paul checked with FLSP to see how they get Navy volunteers. He found out it is by "word of mouth" and through different Navy commands. There is no set POC that FLSP contacts to request volunteers.

### **D. Safety Report - Bruce Davidson, Safety Committee Chair**

-4 InReaches deactivated. John's remains activated.

### **E. Tool Shed Report - Rich Seriani, Tool Boss**

-Returned more tools from the Fall Maintenance

- 3 Silky Big Boys with orange dots
- 3 Scabbard Silky Saws
- 1 Big Boy 500
- 1 Big Boy 650
- 2 42" One-man saws – one was donated by Paul Dickens
- 1 36" one-man saw
- 1 Boy Axe
- 2 Pulaskis
- 2 Hoes

-Picked up 2 underbucking tools, 2 Axe Sheaths, 1 one-man saw handle, and misc. hand tools for the Sawyer Cert training

-Transported tools to and from the initial Sawyer Cert training in Sherando

-Cleaned the tools that were used during the initial Sawyer Cert training and returned everything to the shed

-Cleaned, sharpened, and lubricated six hedge shears that were used during the Fall Maintenance

### **F. Program Report - Lee Lohman, Program Chair**

-December 14: Holiday Party - The Cove from 5-9 pm.

-January 8: TATC Election

-February 12: Guest Speaker - FLSP Maintenance Ranger re: Volunteer Maintenance Groups that can do work in park w/o Ranger supervision

-March 12: Budget Presentation

-April 9: Guest Speaker: Sherri McQueen on Kayaking

-May 14: Guest Speaker - Lance Deaver/resident EMT: Severe Wound Management

-June 11: Guest Speaker - Don Williams/TATC Education Chair: Food on the Trail (description of foods and cooking methods useful on the trail --not car camping)

-July 9: vacant

-August 13: vacant

-September 10: Guest Speaker - Ned Kuhns: Part II of Hadrian Wall

### **G. Outreach Report - John Barnes, Outreach Committee Chair/Kaci Midgette, Co-Chair**

- January 25: 2025 Winter Wildlife Festival - [Kaci registered and we have been accepted. Need volunteers.](#)

### **H. Education Report**

- We will be producing new articles every two months in alignment with newsletters. This project will be ongoing for many months. I also invited new members to join the committee since some members' interests have moved on for the last two cycles of articles. See the Dec/Jan newsletter.
- I'm looking at April 25-27, 2025 for the next Beginner Backpacking hike. I'll do this one at False Cape State Park. I'm picking the date for it to be at the weekend of the new moon so we can see the stars best. Since it's close, people could get off work and get there without being too late. BUT... We must reserve camp spaces. So, we'd need people to sign up early and pay for their spots. This locks in their commitment and I don't have wasted cost. Camp reservations are \$20 each. Each primitive campsite can accept 6 people maximum and/or two "camping units" (not sure if this means tents?). I'll still do prep hikes in the preceding weeks.
- I made reservations for 3 campsites at Falsecape State Park for April 25-27.  
<https://www.moongiant.com/calendar/april/2025/>. That was all I could get that were together. I can accommodate 12 people total. All sites will be in tents. They are oceanside sites. I will collect the minimal cost of the campsites from those who attend. The sites were \$20 per night x 2 nights each site = \$40. For 4 people, that comes out to \$10/person. These are the Virginia State Park fees. This will put us there for the new moon. It should be beautiful! I'll get you full details for posting soon. I will post this open to club members first. If it doesn't fill with club members, I'll open it up to Meetup.

### **I. Social Events Report - Sharon Salyer/Cathrine Fowler, Social Events Committee Co-Chair**

-See "[Holiday Party Status](#)" under Discussion

### **J. Volunteer Time Report - Greg Reck, Timekeeper**

- Timekeeping reports have been flowing in, so far, I've received a total of 305 responses from the 8 of the 9 forms (the Social form will be submitted after the Holiday Party.) With a few exceptions I'm satisfied with the responses, and I think the information they provide is sufficient to meet the Awards Committee needs.
- I am requesting a meeting of the Awards Committee soon to respond to several questions I have with data retention, reporting categories and dates for reporting cumulative data.
- The Awards Committee requested an annual report of volunteer hours for publication in the TATC Newsletter. I plan to deliver that report (for members who have submitted data) for publication in the Feb/Mar Newsletter.
- [Some people still need to report their November volunteer hours.](#)
- [Jim Newman needs to report his and Michell Cobb's volunteer hours for the Award Ceremony.](#)

### **K. Awards Coordinator Report - Jim Newman, Awards Coordinator**

- I now have everything reduced to two boxes containing the following left-overs:
  - 3 ATC Vests (two XXL for Bill Rogers & Ellis Malabad. Also, a size M for Etta Burch)
  - 4 ATC caps
  - 2 ATC pins
  - 100 ATC stickers
  - 22 ATC patches
  - 33 TATC local trails patches Local Trails caps\s
  - 28 TATC AT Crew patches
  - 5 TATC local trails caps
  - 14 Water bottles
- I will keep all these items safely in my truck until springtime deadline for claiming. Will be present for next week's GM

### **L. Hikemaster Report - Kaci Midgette, Hikemaster**

- Looking for event leaders or event ideas.
- Not highlighting Tuesday Groups event because the number of participants is getting too large.

#### **M. Merchandise Report - Mike Martin, Chair**

- 1 online order this month (to date).
- 9 merchandise surveys received since the October GMM.
- Mike will give an inventory report at the next BOD meeting.
- BOD needs to decide if and what new inventory to buy based on people's TATC merchandise requests. Need to review and include in the 2025 budget.

#### **N. Newsletter Report - Peg Seriani, Newsletter Editor**

- Thanks to everyone who submitted articles for the Dec/Jan Newsletter.
- Feb/Mar will be sent out on February 1st, so the next deadline for articles/photos will be **Saturday, January 25th**.
- TATC received a "Thank You" post card from through hiker Mark "Detour" Gardner. Will include a photo of it in the next Newsletter.

#### **O. Webmaster Report - Jim Sexton, Webmaster**

- I updated and revised the Activity Sign-Up Sheet and Sign-Up Sheet Instructions and loaded them to the TATC website.
- I wrote an educational document on 'TATC- Maps, Sketch Map, Distances, and Elevations' and posted it to the TATC website.
- I added the 'ATC Saw Program' slide show to the website.
- I sent out six blast emails in November.
- I used WA to send email reminders to 29 lapsed members, asking them to rejoin. I need to follow up and archive records for those who haven't replied yet.
- I set up SignUpGenius for TATC Holiday Party Volunteer Sign-Ups.
- I attended a Membership Committee meeting.
- Business cards and note cards were dropped off at Outfitters by TATC Members.
- I attended the November Board Meeting.
- I hosted a Happy Hike Hour
- I made six (6) posts to TATC's Group Facebook Page
- I was recertified as a 'B' Sawyer for 'Bucking' by USFS
- I am presently working on revising the Injury Packets.

#### **P. Facebook Report - Bill Bunch, Facebook Master**

- 672 people have joined the group page as of 11/30/2024 up from 652 last month. Controversial comments around November 15 required intervention by Randy Smith, who has administrative rights. Comments on the post were a bit political and included in the comments was a complaint about the religious references made in two prior posts. Political comments are prohibited in the club's Articles of Incorporation. Since there has only been one incident like this, I am not taking any action to change the way I have been managing Facebook. If it becomes necessary, there are actions I can take that will allow for more stringent moderation of content, but they will be less convenient for those who post on Facebook and will require more time to administer our pages.

#### **Q. ATC RPC Report - Ned Kuhns/Jim Sexton, ATC RPC Representative**

- An ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting (VLM) is scheduled for August 15 - 17, 2025. TATC can have two attendees funded by ATC. Our club able to send more attendees if we fund their attendance. ATC has requested one experienced leader and one new leader with potential for the future. I recommend that Lelia and Kaci fill the two ATC funded attendee positions. I recommend that TATC pay for Greg Reck to also attend the VLM to gain experience for the future.
- The 2025 Southern Partnership Meeting (SPM) and spring Virginia Regional Partnership Committee (RPC) Meeting is scheduled for March 21 - 23, 2025 at the Blowing Rock Conference Center in NC. We will be receiving additional information in the new year.

## **R. Nomination Committee - Lee Lohmann, Chair**

2025 TATC Elections: Nomination Committee - Lee Lohman/Chair, Bill Bunch, Cecil Salyer

- President: Lelia Vann, Vice President: Jim Sexton, Treasurer: Andy Grayson, Secretary: Peg Seriani, Trail Supervisor: John Sima, Asst Trail Supervisor: Kaci Midgette, Counselor (rotating 3-year Term): Chris Butler.
- Lee, as the Nominating Committee Chair, will send out an email blast on or before December 19th of the slate of candidates. If the committee doesn't have a nominee for each position, it will be noted. Nominations can be accepted from the floor at the GMM, so we'll have a bit more time to find someone.

## **S. Membership Committee - Bill Bunch, Chair**

At the start of the meeting, Bill took a poll about the importance of the number of activities to our committee.

All agreed that the number of activities are of major importance in building our membership and increasing our renewals. Bill has mentioned using the number of hikes to judge our success because it is a major goal of the committee. Capturing data on those members not renewing is not easy and the membership data coming from the Membership Chair was recently corrected counting a family membership as 2 people instead of 1. Seeing more events on our calendar should be very visible. We also discussed hikes that the individual members of the committee are planning. Kaci is planning a family bike ride; Lelia is planning a "hasty" hike series, and Bill planned a Black Friday Hike and is planning a First Day Hike at First Landing. Jim Newman also agreed to plan/hold a First Day Hike on the peninsula. We discussed the request for additional local trail maintenance opportunities on weekends. One point to be considered is that local trail maintenance should include additional locations beyond First Landing State Park. All club members should be looking for other opportunities. Paul Heyman manages Local Trails, but all club members should help Paul by bringing him new ideas. Jim discussed the possibility of the use of event sign-up software to improve the sign-up process currently in use. (Update) The Black Friday hike took place on 11/29. We had 9 participants, two were first timers. One had recently joined the club, and this was his first event. The other first timer joined us through Meetup and left the hike early, but the day after the hike, he signed up for the First Day Hike. Please consider leading a hike or similar event! We need more weekend events on our calendar!

## **T. Prez Report - Lelia Vann**

- Note that our next Board meeting is January 1st. Happy New Year!!! [The BOD decided to meet on January 2<sup>nd</sup> instead of the 1<sup>st</sup>. Lee will check with the Church to see if it is available on that night.](#)
- Greg Hodges has said he will be the Cabin Chair for 2025. Please let me know if you know ANYONE interested in helping him out as the Cabin Co-chair.
- John Barnes is passing the Outreach torch. Kaci will assume this position and Lon Anderson has said he would take on the Co-chair position if approved by the Board.
- Lee Lohman is passing the Program torch. Let me know if there's any interest in assuming this role.
- Kaci Midgette and I plan to attend the ATC Volunteer Leadership Meeting (VLM) on August 15-17, 2025. If anyone else is interested, please let me know.
- ATC/Pamela Roy/Visual Resource Manager is finalizing "Views of VA along the AT". There are 4 views along our section of the AT that she has photographed. Jim Sexton will represent TATC in evaluating "view importance". TATC section will be virtually viewed on Thursday, December 12th, 1 - 3 pm.
- Stopped by REI following the November meeting and talked with the manager about TATC. She gladly took our outreach material to post.
- Sent a couple of Thank You notes to people that donated to TATC
- We (Greg, Bridgett, and I) plan to lead a Hasty Hiking event on Saturdays at FLSP starting in 2025 and we plan to host the "For Hikers and Jazz Lovers" at Delaware Water Gap again in May.

## **6. Approval Requests:**

### **A. Approved the Nomination of Bill Rodgers to the AT 2025 Hall of Fame - Jim Sexton and Lelia**

Nomination Criteria - Those eligible for inclusion include anyone who has made an exceptional and positive contribution to the Appalachian Trail or Appalachian Trail community. This could be by leadership, inspiration, service, achievement or innovation. This includes, without limitation, pioneers who conceived of and developed the trail; those who organized or directed major trail organizations like the Appalachian Trail

Conservancy and Appalachian Trail clubs; maintaining clubs; longtime trail maintainers; leaders who promoted and protected the A.T.; hikers who have made significant accomplishments, and other persons who have enriched the culture or community of the Appalachian Trail by their association with it. Eligible persons can be living or deceased. The emphasis will be on persons who have made their contribution to the A.T. over a long period, whether or not they are still active. Eligibility and selection will be determined without regard to race, creed, color, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin. [Nominating form submission is due by 1/30/25.](#)

## **7. Discussion Items:**

### **A. Lesson's Learned for Silent Auction - Lee Lohman/Program Chair**

From Lee:

1. Suggest that the online option be eliminated. Only a few people used it. For a small number, it is not worth the processing time.
2. Few downloaded the online form to fill out at home. I would drop it.
3. Instead, email the form that includes the donor information and the bidding lines in a pdf version that anyone could download and fill out at home.
4. I have at least 400 copies of the form noted in 3. That's plenty for those who complete the form onsite next year--and maybe the following year. I'll include them in the box of auction supplies I'm assembling.
5. As you saw, the cashier operation was very smooth and quick. Three cashiers seem to be the ideal number.
6. We could have used one or two additional tables. The church doesn't have them so we could bring our own.
7. Where to store the auction supplies? [The auction supplies are staplers, pens, paper, etc and all fit into 2 Home Depot buckets.](#)

### **B. Lesson's Learned for Sawyer Cert/Recert Training - John Sima, Bruce, Rich, Kaci, Jim**

- Greg Reck/Timekeeper said he received a Time Form submitted by Paul Heymann for the certification training attended by TATC. Did those attending Recert Training submit? Who attended the recert training?

-Rich Seriani's Feedback:

-One con was the lack of communication/advance coordination from the ATC and Forest Service. They didn't tell us who from the club was going, where to meet, and if we would need a gate code to get into Sherando. We had to ask those questions and (if I remember correctly) they answered just a couple days before the training. This is the perspective of a "first-timer" who doesn't like to do anything without a plan.

-I thought the training was great and I feel like I know more about clearing trees from the trail than I did before the training.

-I learned that we should be hanging our crosscut saws and axes, so I'll look into how to do that in shed.

-The BOD discussed that there was the same low communication 2 years ago between the TATC and the FS/ATC. [Other times at other locations there were better communications.](#)

-Need more people certified in order to have 20-30 "B" certified people.

-Meagan may be at the Spring Cleanup and/or the Spring Maintenance event at Sherando to certify people to "B" level.

-PPE: Comment from Don came up last month with respect to wearing PPE during AT maintenance sawyer work after seeing Bill Bunch's report re: FB. What is expected via USFS training?

-From Don: The topic of people being in photos without their hard hat and safety glasses on came up at the board meeting. As part of my teaching duties, I used to teach industrial safety. There is one consistently agreed upon solution to people wearing PPE: it must be worn ALL THE TIME. So, applying this to trail maintenance, whenever the group stops to saw on a tree, everyone puts on their hard hat and safety glasses and they stay on until the tree work is finished. Stepping back does not relieve them of the obligation to where the safety glasses and hard hat. To help enforce this policy, I would suggest this be sent out as an email blast to the entire club so that verified Sawyers and those who work with them will see the club's policy defined. I've asked Bob to keep track of what they say about the topic of PPE at the sawyer training this weekend.

-The BOD decided to table this topic until the next BOD meeting. Lelia asked the Safety Committee to come up with their recommendation for this next discussion.

### **C. Holiday Party Status - Catherine**

- Signup Genius worked out great! Thank you so much Jim! All slots are filled. I did not sign up for a slot, but plan to setup Friday, help with food, and cleanup on Saturday.
- We are planning for 80 people. There's enough plates, cutlery, napkins, and cups for that many people (with a few extras). Dessert plates, sodas, tea (?), ice, and maybe a few miscellaneous items will need to be purchased. About \$70.00 has been spent on tablecloths, extra dinner plates, and cups. This leaves about \$230.00 left to purchase items needed.
- Question: When the 2nd reminder for the Holiday Party goes out, is there any way to have members RSVP? There are 8 round tables at the Cove and 8 chairs go around nicely, but we can squeeze 10 chairs per table. I just think it would be nice to know. If we don't do RSVP this time, maybe in the future we can.
- Jim Sexton will setup SignUpGenius and send out an email blast.
- Kaci will update the TATC calendar to add "\$5 door charge to offset costs" in the party details.

### **Other discussion item:**

-Jim Sexton has gotten all of the supplies needed for the injury packs but he still needs the POC information. He contacted VARO to ask who are the POCs for the Forest Service and Park Service when reporting an injury. VARO did not give any definitive answers. One reason is the POCs change every other year. Jim will have to continue checking to get the POC information.

**Adjournment:** President Vann adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.